

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
ExxonMobil - Baytown Olefins Plant (073119) - Removal Polrep
Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region VI

Subject: POLREP #2
Final Polrep
ExxonMobil - Baytown Olefins Plant (073119)

Baytown, TX
Latitude: 29.7569734 Longitude: -95.0106895

To:
From: Gary Moore, FOSC
Date: 8/5/2019
Reporting Period:

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority: CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead: PRP	Incident Category:	Removal Assessment
NPL Status: Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date: 7/31/2019	Start Date:	7/31/2019
Demob Date: 8/1/2019	Completion Date:	8/4/2019
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:	State Notification:	07/31/2019
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

1.1.2 Site Description

The facility is an Olefins Plant owned by ExxonMobil.

1.1.2.1 Location

3625 Decker Drive
Baytown, Harris County, TX 77520

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The threat is the potential exposure to the community surrounding the facility.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

The ExxonMobil - Baytown Olefins Plant experienced a fire/explosion that impacted the depropanizer unit. The fire continued until 2200 hrs. Air monitoring conducted by ExxonMobil, TCEQ, Harris County Pollution Control, and EPA have revealed no detections or no significant detections. Due to the volume of firewater and rainfall events, it was necessary for ExxonMobil to discharge water through outfall 002 as they could not keep up with pumping the water to the Refinery WWTP. According to ExxonMobil, the firewater going to outfall 002 was from water overspray that landed outside the unit. TCEQ handled the coordination with the facility on the additional sampling requirements necessary.

A total of 74 Exxon employees and contractors were transported off-site for medical evaluation. 46 of the 74 required some form of first aid, while 28 of the 74 only required medical examination. All 74 patients were released after examination/first aid.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

On 7/31/2019, at approximately at 10:45 hrs a fire started in one of the depropanizer units, at the ExxonMobil - Baytown Olefins Plant located in Baytown, Harris County, TX. At approximately 1126 hrs, the EPA received an NRC Report (1253761) from a private citizen concerning the incident. At approximately 1147 hrs, the City of Baytown issued a shelter-in-place for the surrounding community. News reports indicated that the material burning was propylene and that ExxonMobil personnel had isolated the unit and were allowing the residual materials to burn off. The EPA Phone Duty Officer coordinated with TCEQ-Houston, which had responded to the scene. EPA activated its START contractors from the Houston Office to assist in the assessment of the incident and conduct air monitoring. The EPA Response Duty Officer from Dallas was deployed, and EPA's ASPECT aircraft was activated.

The EPA joined efforts with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Harris County Pollution Control Services (HPCPS) and ExxonMobil to conduct perimeter and community air monitoring for Total VOCs, LEL, H2S & CO. As of 1500 hours, no detections or no significant detections had been observed. At approximately 1507 hours, the City of Baytown lifted the shelter-in place. At 1600 hours ExxonMobil notified the NRC Report (1253799) and indicated a release of Butadiene, Benzene, and Nitrogen Oxide associated with flaring activities associated with the impacts of the fire. EPA ASPECT Aircraft flew over the incident location at approximately 1625 hours and initial reports indicate no detections.

OSC Moore arrived on-site at approximately 1815 hours to begin coordination with facility personnel as well as TCEQ and HPCPS. At that time, the fire was still ongoing, but was isolated and appeared contained with fire fighting activities ongoing, ExxonMobil anticipates the fire will continue for up to 12 hours depending upon their ability to effectively isolate the necessary valves. Limited visual emission were noticeable at 1815 hours. The material reported to be involved include propylene, ethylene, and C4 + compounds. At 2200 hrs, the facility reported that the fire was out but there was a chance of re-ignition so they have not called the all clear. As of 2400 hrs, no reports of detections around the perimeter of the site or in the community have been reported. ExxonMobil personnel will continue air monitoring throughout the night and will inform the Agencies if conditions change.

On 1 August 2019, EPA/HPCPS/ExxonMobil continued perimeter fence-line and community air monitoring activities. EPA/HPCPS ceased community air monitoring activities at 1700 hours. ExxonMobil plans to continue perimeter fence line and community air monitoring activities until the all clear is determined. ExxonMobil continues isolating the process unit and de-inventory operations of the depropanizer unit. It is unknown at this time how much longer the de-inventory process will take. The cause of the incident is still under investigation. A total of 74 Exxon employees and contractors were transported off-site for medical evaluation. 46 of the 74 required some form of first aid, while 28 of the 74 only required medical examination. All 74 patients were released after examination/first aid. EPA demobilized from the site on 1930 hours, however will continue to monitor site activities through correspondence with ExxonMobil officials.

ExxonMobil plans to continue the following activities until the situation is stabilized. Those activities include:

- Continue applying water spray as needed to suppress vapors to prevent any remaining hydrocarbons from re-igniting;
- Continue the process of de-inventorying the unit to remove the remaining materials;
- Continue pumping water from the Outfall 002 ditch to the refinery waste water treatment plant as well as continue sampling outfall 002 should water continue to be discharged - TCEQ coordinating this activity under their TPDES requirements.
- Continue to air monitor until the potential threat of fire and continued release subsides.

On August 4, 2019 at approximately 1530 hours, ExxonMobil determined that the incident was stabilized and stood down their Incident Command for this incident and moved into an investigative and remediation phase.

2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

The PRP is:
Exxon Mobil - Baytown Olefins Plant
3625 Decker Drive
Baytown, Harris County, TX 77520

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

ExxonMobil has completed the necessary activities associated with the Emergency Phase of this incident and has transitioned into an investigative and remediation phase.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

No future emergency activities planned.

2.2.2 Issues

2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

No information available at this time.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

ExxonMobil - Baytown Olefins Plant
Harris County
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

4. Personnel On Site

No information available at this time.

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

No information available at this time.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.